



State of Tennessee
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Tennessee State Library and Archives
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**TENNESSEE DEFENSE FORCE
(TENNESSEE STATE GUARD)
COLLECTION
1941-1991**

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INTRODUCTION

The Tennessee Defense Force (Tennessee State Guard) Collection contains a brief history and description of operations for the period since its inception in 1941. The material in this finding aid consists of approximately .42 cubic feet of materials and was created for the purpose of researching and writing the history of the Tennessee Defense Force. An historical sketch is included in the collection, written by the donor of the collection, William Donegan.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Tennessee Defense Force (Tennessee State Guard) collection relates to the history and operations of the agency for the period 1941-1998. Items in the collection include biographical sketches, correspondence, historical sketches, lists, manuals, a mission statement, a newspaper clipping, an organizational chart, pamphlets, photographs, publications, regulations, and reports. Of interest in the collection is the historical sketch written on the Tennessee Defense force in 1991 and updated through 1997. Also of interest in the collection are the reports showing the number of enlisted personnel in the State Guard for the years 1942-1946. Of related interest are materials concerning the Indiana Guard Reserve for the years 1968 and 1971.

This collection is not a comprehensive look into the operations of the Tennessee Defense Force (Tennessee State Guard) due to the small amount of material it contains. This collection consists of research on the Defense Force to aid in the creation of the historical sketch on the organization.

TENNESSEE DEFENSE FORCE (TENNESSEE STATE GUARD) HISTORY

The Tennessee Defense Force was originally created as the Tennessee State Guard by Public Chapter 15 of the Public Acts of 1941 under the caption “to provide for the Tennessee State Guard to be used when any part of the National Guard is called into federal service.” This act provided that all members of the State Guard would be volunteer and without pay as their patriotic duty. Its members were recognized as soldiers under the authority of the United States Constitution and Statutes of the State of Tennessee. The Tennessee Guard was to continue no more than thirty days after the National Guard was relieved from Federal service. Members of the State Guard with one or more years of service were given opportunity to join the National Guard after cessation of hostilities.

In order to create the State Guard, the 72nd General Assembly authorized a \$500,000 bond issue and also authorized the Governor to make such expenditures as deemed necessary from the Emergency Appropriation Fund. Member was originally listed as 230 officers and 3,867 enlisted men. Even before the State Guard was one year old, it was the largest guard in the South, the largest in the nation in proportion to population, and the fifth largest in the nation regardless of population. It was the first State Guard to receive federally supervised field training and was equipped and trained before most other state units had gone much beyond the first stages of organization.

When originally created, the State Guard was composed of three divisions, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, located respectively in West, Middle, and East Tennessee. Major General Thomas A. Frazier, Tennessee Air National Guard, The Adjutant General, was appointed commander of the State Guard. The 1st Infantry was commanded by Colonel James W. Bodley of Memphis, and was quickly reorganized into two regiments: the 1st based in Memphis, and the 5th based in Jackson. These regiments eventually became the 1st Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Bodley. The 2nd Infantry was commanded by Colonel J. M. Dickinson of Franklin, and was reorganized into three regiments: the 2nd based in Nashville, the 7th based in Cookeville, and the 10th based in Pulaski. These regiments eventually became the 2nd Brigade, commanded by General Dickinson. The 3rd Infantry was commanded by Colonel James A. Gleason, and was also reorganized into two regiments: the 3rd based in Kingsport, and the 6th, based in Chattanooga. These regiments then became the 3rd Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Gleason.

The mission of the State Guard, during the absence of the National Guard in Federal Service, was to provide an adequately trained force for employment within the boundaries and jurisdiction of their respective state. Uses of the State Guard included

maintaining laws, meeting domestic emergencies, guarding and protecting vital industries, suppressing the activities of enemy agents, cooperating with Federal authorities in extreme emergencies, and to perform other duties as assigned to the National Guard. The Tennessee State Guard became inactive as of January 1, 1948. It existed sporadically, however, until being reorganized in 1985 as the Tennessee Defense Force.

The Tennessee Defense Force was organized effective July 1, 1985, by Public Chapter 36 of the Public Acts of 1985, consisting of a headquarters and four Brigades. The headquarters was based in Nashville and was led by Major General Thomas G. Wells and Brigadier General Harrell E. Webb, Chief of Staff. The 1st Brigade was based in Jackson and commanded by Brigadier General Roland L. Parkhill. The 2nd Brigade was based in Smyrna and commanded by Brigadier General Fred C. Powell. The 3rd Brigade was based in Knoxville and commanded by Brigadier Robinson R. Watson. The 4th Brigade was based in Chattanooga and commanded by Brigadier General Holman J. Walker. The mission of the Tennessee Defense Force was to provide an adequately trained force capable of providing an organized state military reserve force under gubernatorial control, which could accomplish those state emergency responsibilities normally assigned to the National Guard when that force is federalized or otherwise not available. The first training session was held in August of 1986, with a total of 234 personnel present.

The Tennessee Defense Force was renamed the Tennessee State Guard by Public Chapter 584 of the acts of 1998. The State Guard remains in existence with the same mission of protecting the public when the National Guard has been called to active duty.

A complete history of the Tennessee Defense Force, through 1997, is available in this collection in folder 10.

CONTAINER LIST

BOX 1

1. Biographical sketch – Charles Turner Howland
2. Biographical sketch – James Roulston
3. Correspondence – Charles H. Anderson, 1984
4. Correspondence – Colonel R. A. Bailey, 1946
5. Correspondence – Major General Hugh B. Mott, 1970
6. Correspondence – Organization of the State Guard, 1970
7. Correspondence – Colonel Donnie K. Smith, 1994
8. Correspondence – Brigadier General Sam T. Wallace, 1966-1971
9. Flag Day, 1971
10. Historical Sketch – Tennessee Defense Force, 1991
11. Historical Sketch – State Guard, 1941
12. Lists – Officers, 6th Regiment, September 15, 1945
13. Lists – Tennessee Defense Force Staff Meeting, May 19, 1984
14. Manuals – Training Manual, Tennessee Defense Force, 1987
15. Mission Statement – Tennessee State Guard Reserve, 1980
16. Newspaper Clippings – Editorial – “Disband the Police Force,” July 18, 1945
17. Organizational Chart – Tennessee Defense Force
18. Pamphlet – Indiana Guard Reserve
19. Pamphlet – Tennessee Defense Force
20. Photograph Copies – Company E, Second Battalion, 117th Infantry, Dickson, Tennessee
21. Publications – *Hi Lites*, Indiana Guard Reserve, June, 1971
22. Publications – *The State Guardsman*, April - May, 1963
23. Regulations – Tennessee State Guard, 1941 and 1945
24. Regulations – Indiana State Guard, 1971
25. Reports – Indiana Guard Reserve, Staff Levels, October, 1968
26. Reports – Infantry Regiment, Headquarters, Headquarters detachment, Medical Detachment, Machine Gun and Chemical Company, Staff Levels, July 1, 1942, August 2, 1943
27. Report – Tabulation of Actual Strength and Amory Drill Attendance, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Infantry, March 1946
28. Reports – Tabulation of Actual Strength and Armory Drill Attendance, Tennessee State Guard, October 1946
29. Report – Tennessee State Guard, State Staff and State Detachment, April 1, 1943
30. Reunion, 630th Tank Destroyer Battalion, 1970